

CHILD CARE CONNECTIONS



A publication of Family Guidance Center of Alabama



April, May, and June 2026

Week of the Young Child

The National Association for Education of Young Children celebrates early learning, young children, their teachers and families this year April 11-17, 2026. For more information on WOYC activities and daily themes for the week, visit <https://www.naeyc.org/events/woyc>.

There in honor of all of your hard work, a poem by Nicole J. Hussey, who originally wrote this poem as a gift for her co-worker, but now dedicates it to every hardworking early childhood educator — because you matter more than you may know.



More Than You May Know

A poem for early childhood educators

Walk to the door and breathe in deep,
you turn the lock, roll up your sleeves.
No way to know what's on the way —
which version of each child today?

They drop off bags and big demands,
“Forgot a hat, forgot spare pants.”
you nod and smile, “We’ll make it through,”
while tripping over someone’s shoe.

You try to gather for a song,
but mayhem doesn’t wait too long.
One child’s whining, one won’t stay —
one’s got their belly on display.

You fill the plates, you wipe the spill,
you pass the forks, you beg, “Sit still!”
You fetch more milk, you fill the cups —
you need eight arms when lunch erupts.

Then comes the line — you know the one,
you take your post, parade’s begun.
You wipe, you wash, you wipe some more —
your feet are tired, hands are sore.

Zip fifteen coats, tie thirty shoes,
turn to find someone hasn’t moved.
The rest are waiting at the door —
the barefoot one rolls on the floor.

You herd them in with windswept hair,
shake off the dirt, it’s everywhere.
You serve a snack, the end in view —
one final stretch, still left to do.

It’s past the time the doors should close,
but one last bag has yet to go.
You smile and say, “It’s no big deal,”
and swallow how you really feel.

You’re home at last, it feels so sweet,
could drop and sleep for one whole week.
Please lift yourself with gentle grace —
you deserve some peace, some time, some space.

So rest, recover, breathe in slow,
you matter more than you may know.
The future grows in what you do —
but only if there’s care for you.

© Nicole J Hussey — 2025.



RESOURCE LIBRARY



We invite you to visit our resource libraries in Dothan and Montgomery for lots of great ideas and materials to enhance your learning environment.

Each library offers a selection of books, learning materials, puppets, kits and a wide assortment of die cuts. Best of all, it is a free resource for you. We provide basic colors of construction paper for die cuts and lamination. For check out procedures and die cut orders, please contact the resource librarian in your area. Be sure to sign up for the library newsletters emailed each month.



Remember, we have die cuts for Spring and upcoming special days!

CONTACT INFORMATION

Dothan

Library hours: 8:30 am to 4:00 pm
Monday - Friday (*evening appointments available*)

Resource Specialist:

Michelle Woodham (334) 712-7777 ext. 1713
Email: michelle.woodham1@dhr.alabama.gov

Montgomery

Library hours: 8:30 am - 4:00 pm
Monday - Friday (*evening appointments available*)

Resource Specialist:

Lisa Kirkland (334) 270-4100 ext. 1102
Email: lisa.kirkland@dhr.alabama.gov

BE ON THE LOOK OUT FOR SPRING

Take children outside for a nature scavenger hunt.

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> insects | <input type="checkbox"/> trees | <input type="checkbox"/> sand |
| <input type="checkbox"/> flowers | <input type="checkbox"/> grass | <input type="checkbox"/> leaves |
| <input type="checkbox"/> birds | <input type="checkbox"/> dirt | <input type="checkbox"/> sun |



Add more items based on the age of your children.
Be more specific-add colors, numbers, or shapes.
Most of all have fun!



ALABAMA PUBLIC TELEVISION'S EARLY CHILDHOOD ONLINE SPRING TRAINING COURSES



Spring 2026 - Registration opens on our website March 16, 2026

- Alabama Early Learning Guidelines (AELG) Online April 6 - May 24, 2026
- New! Every Child is Welcome: Fostering Inclusion in the Child Care Setting - CCDF 15 - April 6 – April 27, 2026
https://aptv.org/education/professional-development/?fwp_pro_dev_course_type=facilitated

APT's On-Demand Course Catalog

APT's On-Demand Trainings - APT's on-demand 2-hour trainings are always available.
Scan the QR code or visit aptv.org/on-demand to access APT's on-demand self-enrollment.



For more APT training opportunities see the Dothan and Montgomery training calendars.



Child Abuse Prevention Month



April is Child Abuse Prevention month. As an early education professional, you are a mandated child abuse reporter. However, you are so much more. You are an advocate, an educator and a role model. Being on the front lines provide opportunities to see the children on a day-to-day basis to notice any warning signs of abuse. As a role model, you offer safe, nurturing and stable learning environments for children and their families. It takes a team effort to support children and families. As a professional you can build a child's social and emotional skills in a safe space through consistent care. Teach children techniques to calm themselves and handle big emotions. Provide an outlet for emotions or just be a good listener and support them.

April is a great reminder to refresh or update your knowledge about the signs of child abuse.

Here are a few website for you and to share with families:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/child-abuse-neglect/about/index.html>
- <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/child-abuse/symptoms-causes/syc-20370864>
- <https://www.nationalchildrensalliance.org/10-signs-of-child-abuse/>
- <https://dhr.alabama.gov/child-protective-services/>
- <https://aldhr.remote-learner.net/course/index.php?categoryid=1>
- Also check with your local or regional child advocacy center

Contact information for the mental health consultant for each region:

Dothan: 1-866-419-6868 ; new consultant coming soon

(Butler, Crenshaw, Pike, Covington, Barbour, Coffee, Dale, Henry, Geneva, and Houston.)

Montgomery: **Debbie Bailey**, dbailey@familyguidancecenter.org, 334-746-1005
(Montgomery, Autauga, Elmore, Bullock, Macon, Lee and Russell)

For more information about the program visit: <https://www.first5alabama.org/>



First 5 Alabama[®]
Alabama Association for Infant and
Early Childhood Mental Health

MEET OUR INFANT/TODDLER SPECIALISTS

Looking for opportunities to increase the quality of care for your infants and toddlers?
Please contact the specialist in your area:

DOTHAN: Barbara Culver, 334-712-7777 or barbara.culver@dhr.alabama.gov

MONTGOMERY: Adrienne Royster, 334-270-4100 or adrienne.royster@dhr.alabama.gov



It was a great SUCCESS! Sensational Saturday with SHAWN BROWN

We cannot say thank you enough for making Sensational Saturday a tremendous success. We had over 300 professionals join us for a fun day of learning and networking. We can't wait until next year!



Interested in obtaining your Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)?
For information, visit the Council for Professional Recognition
at <https://www.cdacouncil.org/en/>





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CALENDARS

RED - Montgomery office **IN PERSON** classes
BLUE - Dothan office **IN PERSON** classes

GREEN - **ZOOM** classes
 ***Register with the **HOST** office

Please see the calendar insert for the following:

- ◆ Registration procedures
- ◆ Classes specifically for directors/administration
- ◆ Trainings in person and via ZOOM



Our office will be closed the following dates:

- April 27, 2026
- May 25, 2026
- June 1, 2026
- June 19, 2026



SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

T.E.A.C.H. ALABAMA EARLY CHILDHOOD SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

A project of Alabama Partnership for Children, helps early learning professionals increase their level of education and effectiveness in the classroom by making the educational process more attainable and affordable. For more information, contact Alabama Partnership for Children at 334-271-0304. or visit <https://alabamapartnershipforchildren.org/our-work/t-e-a-c-h/>

LEADERSHIP IN CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIP

The scholarships are funded by the Department of Human Resources. For additional information, contact Virginia Frazer, Leadership in Child Care Scholarship program assistant, at (334) 293-4552 or by email at virginia.frazer@accs.edu. <https://www.accs.edu/community-college/leadership-in-childcare/>

